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The Delight of the Critical Edition of *Reason in Society*

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ABSTRACT

Reviewing the critical edition of *Reason in Society* involves assessing the editorial scholarship undertaken in producing the volume as well as an assessment of the scholarly importance of the book. Both these assessments are positive, although I believe the intellectual importance of *Reason in Society* is underrated. Santayana's analysis of societies is influenced by his intellectual heritage drawn principally from Plato, Aristotle, and Spinoza as well as on his personal experiences with many European, Asian, and American cultures. His is an individualistic approach based on his naturalism. He views societal developments as natural and every form of government as repressive. Inequality is a natural aspect of human life, and fairness is the model for all humans living well together. He writes: "Inequality is not a grievance; suffering is" [Santayana 2013, p. 67]. His views are prescient, indicating some aspects taken up by John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, and have important considerations for our modern world where nationalism and conflict appear to be on the rise. For Santayana, love and families form the foundations of societies and at their best foster rational, free individuals. Free individuals may choose governmental structures to support and live in. Ideals are a natural part of human life although they cannot be fully realized in the natural world. Hence, individuals must find the best way to advance their own ideals. Santayana suggests that governments are like weather. One may have little control over the changing weather or

governments, but one may seek out societies that permit and enhance one's ideals.

Key Words: naturalism, reason, fairness, justice, ideals, freedom, societies.

RESUMEN

Evaluar la edición crítica de *La razón en la sociedad* implica tanto valorar el trabajo editorial necesario para la confección del volumen como valorar la importancia académica del libro. Ambas valoraciones son positivas; creo incluso que la importancia intelectual de *La razón en la sociedad* está infravalorada. El análisis que Santayana lleva a cabo de las sociedades debe mucho a su herencia intelectual, fundamentalmente a Platón, Aristóteles y Spinoza, así como a su experiencia personal con múltiples culturas europeas, asiáticas y americanas. El suyo es un acercamiento individualista basado en su naturalismo. Considera los desarrollos societarios como naturales y toda forma de gobierno como represivo. La desigualdad es un aspecto natural de la vida humana y la imparcialidad es el modelo para los humanos que viven bien juntos. En sus palabras: «La desigualdad no es un agravio, el sufrimiento sí lo es» [Santayana 2013, p. 67]. Sus opiniones fueron visionarias, señalando algunos aspectos abordados por John Rawls en su *Teoría de la justicia* y son muy relevantes para el mundo actual, donde el nacionalismo y los conflictos proliferan. Para Santayana, el amor y las familias constituyen los fundamentos de las sociedades y, cuando son excelentes, producen individuos libres y racionales. Los individuos libres elegirán estructuras de gobierno que apoyarán y en las que vivirán. Los ideales son parte natural de la vida humana, aunque no puedan realizarse por completo en el mundo natural. De ahí que los individuos hayan de encontrar el mejor modo para realizar sus ideales. Santayana apunta que el gobierno es como el clima. Acaso cada cual tenga escaso control sobre los cambiantes gobiernos y climas, pero puede buscar sociedades que permitan y refuercen sus ideales.

Palabras clave: naturalismo, razón, imparcialidad, justicia, ideales, libertad, sociedades

I. TWO INQUIRIES

Reviewing a critical edition involves at least two inquiries. First, is the published text based on the best research, scholarship and decisions that meet the established standards for critical editions? Second, what is the value of the unmodernized text for contemporary thought? The quick response to the first question is clearly yes, and while the response to the second question is also quite positive, it is also more complicated.

I.1. THE SCHOLARSHIP OF THE CRITICAL EDITION

The fundamental rationale for a critical edition is to publish the final intentions of the author in an unmodernized version resulting in a text that best reflects the author's established judgments as documented in the critical edition. The principles and research involved in critical editions are intricate and complicated, and they require the utmost scholarly rigor. One may find a detailed and thorough account of this scholarship in the "Textual Commentary" [Santayana 2013, pp. 183-210], but here is a very brief account of the *scholarship* involved in producing the critical edition of *Reason in Society*.

Choosing a copy-text is essential. Normally, the copy-text is the one closest to the author's original work, such as a manuscript or a first impression of the first edition. The rationale for a copy-text is found in the work of Sir Walter Greg [Greg, 1950] whose work helps explain the scholarship of critical editions and how they differ from historical editions. Thomas Tanselle also explicates the copy-text approach in two articles that were written near the inception of the Santayana Edition [Tanselle, 1972, 1975]. Tanselle was an important influence in the development of *The Works of George Santayana*, and he was kind enough to spend time with me as I began to hone my knowledge and expertise in editing critical editions in 1976.

One must locate and examine all relevant, extant material, and that is no small task. Well over one hundred institutions and

individuals have texts, papers, letters, and other relevant materials relating to *Reason in Society*. The editors did a thorough job of finding and examining all relevant material. This discovery phase was enhanced by the edition's forty years of experience in locating all relevant Santayana material beginning with the publication of *George Santayana: A Bibliographical Checklist, 1880-1980* and the annual updates published in *Overheard in Seville: Bulletin of the Santayana Society*. Since no manuscripts for *Reason in Society* were extant, the editors chose the first edition, first printing of Scribner's 1905 publication as the copy-text. A diagram of the full history of the work's publication is found on page 197 of the edition. Locating all extant material is only the beginning of an extensive and intensive process. One must also draw up a complete list of alterations between the chosen copy-text and any other version of the text, decide which of these variants are authorial and which are not, and finally make judgments about what were Santayana's final intentions pertaining to each alteration discovered in the research.

Compiling a list of alterations from the copy-text is also no small task. There are a minimum of two, independent sight collations of relevant material against the chosen copy-text. Normally, each sight collation is conducted by two editors with one holding and silently reading the copy-text while the other person reads aloud the other text being considered. Differences between the two texts are clearly noted and a detailed listing of the differences is clearly designated by the readers. Sight collations are conducted by well-trained individuals consisting of at least two independent teams. The independence of each collation provides additional assurances of the accuracy of the final listing of alterations. When both texts to be compared are in published form, there are also machine collations that prove particularly helpful in determining differences in editions as well as impressions of the printed text. The end result is a list of alterations from the copy-text.

Sometimes there are significant differences between the copy-text and other publications. This was certainly true of Santayana's

autobiography, *Persons and Places*, where the original manuscript differed considerably from the first publications and there were more than 600-typed pages of changes that included making the volume consistent with the publisher's house styling, censorship of sensitive issues, elimination of marginal headings, broken type, and substituting English translations (sometimes mistranslations) of foreign terms.

Fortunately, *Reason in Society*, did not have such challenges and the extensive research resulted in only twenty-nine emendations to the copy-text involving nineteen substantive changes and ten accidentals. A discussion of the adopted readings may be found in three pages of the volume [Santayana 2013, pp. 311-313]. The editors of this volume deserve the highest praise for their thorough, rigorous and conservative approach to this critical edition resulting in a volume that comes as close as humanly possible to Santayana's final intentions for the work.

1.2. THE HISTORICAL AND INTELLECTUAL VALUE OF *REASON IN SOCIETY*

Reason in Society, along with the other four books of *The Life of Reason*, is of considerable historical significance in terms of American philosophy, naturalism, and the development of American thought and literature. It established a permanent place for Santayana in American philosophy, and these five books remained one of his best-known and widely reviewed works until his death in 1952. On a biographical note, it led to Harvard promoting Santayana being from Assistant Professor to Professor in 1907, including doubling his salary to \$4,000 per year.

The intellectual value of *Reason in Society* for contemporary society is, I fear, underestimated and underappreciated. Santayana's observations were both intellectual as well as based on first-hand knowledge of world societies, cultures and governments. His observations occurred at a time preceding World War I, when many

European and Asian countries reflected a patriotic nationalism and populism that led to their being proud of their origins and also led to an isolation from many other cultures and nations. The rise of leadership leading to autocratic societies and even dictatorships seemed to be nesting in both the Western and the Eastern world. One may conjecture that there are some similarities to our own time when the rise of populism and nationalism appear to be on the increase. Global and regional alliances such as NATO, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the United Nations are all being called into question by major partners in those alliances, particularly by the current leadership in the U.S. The Middle East likewise now appears to have two rival alliances, one led by Iran and the other by Saudi Arabia, and they are divided by religion, political ideology, and geographical strategic interests that are often in conflict.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Santayana saw first-hand many of these elements in the Occidental world, and some of *Reason in Society* reflects his observations, analysis, concerns and recommendations. To be fair, it is important to note that his analysis is based on an individualistic approach that some critics find outdated, aristocratic, disconcerting, even unpatriotic and un-American. But his is an honest approach to the issues he observed, and there are many insights and even recommendations that can positively inform our current societies. To understand his approach, one needs to have a grasp of the intellectual heritage of this volume as well as his personal experiences leading him to writing *The Life of Reason*.

2. INTELLECTUAL PRELUDE TO *REASON IN SOCIETY*

On May 25, 1904 Santayana sent his first installment of *The Life of Reason* to Scribner's noting there were four more books to follow. He referred to this work as his *magnum opus* [Santayana 2001, p. 1:264]. These five books were the culmination of intellectual and personal currents that began much earlier, enlarging his view of life

and the world while developing is unique brand of naturalism. At the time, naturalism was little known or studied at Harvard or in other American universities, and for that reason Santayana's work is a pivotal point in American thought. *The Life of Reason* is rooted in Santayana's expanding naturalism and grounded in Plato, Aristotle and Spinoza. During the late nineteenth century at Harvard, Plato and Aristotle were studied principally as idealist and often considered proto-Christian [Santayana 1930, p. 249]. Santayana's Walker Fellowship to Berlin (1886), shared with Charles Augustus Strong, introduced him to Greek ethics as a form of reason, and later (1896) during a more systematic study at Trinity College, Cambridge, with the Plato scholar Henry Jackson, he discerned not only Plato's ideal of reason but also the naturalism of Aristotle where beauty, the ideal, and reasonable order were the products of the natural world. Earlier his reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, sparked his interest in the history of thought, and for several years he taught a Harvard course on the history of philosophy in the 1890s. Santayana's interests in historical figures and in naturalism led to "the composition of *The Life of Reason*" [Santayana 1930, p. 249].

Santayana's indebtedness to Spinoza is evident and even heralded by Santayana. Spinoza enabled Santayana to see the natural universe as an ultimate. Instead of nature being seen apart from reason, reason is viewed as a part of nature. Spinoza was Santayana's "master and model" in understanding the natural base of morality [Santayana 1986, p. 235]. But Spinoza did not satisfy Santayana in respect to "how humane and representative" was "his sense for the good, and how far, by his disposition or sympathetic intelligence" was he able to "appreciate all types of excellence toward which life may be directed?" [Santayana 1986, p.235]. In *Reason in Society*, Santayana opens the door to naturalism as the basis for morality and clearly moves to appreciate the many types of human excellence. Santayana's appreciation for all human excellence sets him apart from many of his American and European colleagues, and he is especially critical of repressive forms of government and industry

that may be found in many societies including economically and scientifically advanced cultures.

These intellectual preludes led to this book bringing naturalism to the U.S. and led to naturalism's resurgence in many other parts of the world's literary and scholarly culture. His respect for the diversity of human excellence is an important element that did not lead him to idealize American democracy or the capitalistic, industrial enterprise that he thought was too prevalent among his American contemporaries, particularly John Dewey. Instead, he was very critical of America and its form of democracy and capitalism. He sometimes did this with pointed humor as in his poem, "Young Sammy's First Wild Oats," and more systematically in *The Genteel Tradition*. Although most frequently thought of as an American philosopher, for many readers it is a surprise that he never became an American citizen but retained his Spanish citizenship his entire life. Even in Spain, Franco's regime saw him as a traitor and forbade him to be read or written about. Indeed, he was referred to as a traitor and an atheist by some prominent Spanish writers. Throughout his life he was always something of an outsider no matter where he lived. His novel, *The Last Puritan* (1936), led to his being nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, but Scribner's and perhaps others thought he did not receive the prize because it was discovered that he was not American. However, *The Life of Reason* brought him to the forefront of American intellectual development, and his foundational place in American thought was permanent. Even as late as the 1951, Scribner's asked Santayana to edit and publish a one-volume edition of *The Life of Reason*. Although Santayana worked on some of this one-volume edition, the larger task fell to Daniel Cory because of Santayana's health, illness and death in 1952.

3. PERSONAL PRELUDE TO *REASON IN SOCIETY*

Santayana's knowledge of the world and of cultures was certainly more than intellectual. He was a world traveler. Although he was

a Spanish citizen teaching at Harvard, by 1905 he was becoming a more like a world citizen familiar with many cultures and societal structures. His early childhood was spent in Ávila, Spain. In his ninth year, he came with his father to Boston in June 1872 to join his mother and his Boston family. His mother had earlier moved from Ávila to Boston in 1868 or 1869. His father returned to Spain after only a few months in Boston finding it not a place he wanted to live. Santayana began his annual travels to Europe at the end of his sophomore year (June 1883) at Harvard College. He first returned to see his father, traveling to Ávila and other Spanish cities as well as Paris. Then his travels expanded significantly through the remainder of his undergraduate, graduate, and professorial years. He spent many summers in Europe, principally in England, Germany, France, Italy and Spain. Between 1904-1906, Santayana spent 27 months abroad, including the only sabbatical he ever took (1904-1905), traveling through Europe and the Middle East. He visited many of his usual places in Europe and also traveled to Sicily, Greece, Egypt, Palestine, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Damascus, Baalbeck, Beirut, Athens, Piraeus, Constantinople, Budapest, Vienna, and he had an extended stay in Paris where he became a Hyde Lecturer at the Sorbonne.

During his intellectual and personal development, he began analyzing the rational prospects for individual development in different societies. He wondered how societies are formed, why are they so often repressive to individual development, and could there be a rational approach to an orderly society that fostered individual development and the pursuit of ideals in the natural world. He was pressed by questions: What are ideal goals in a natural world? What is possible in organizing a society so that individuals have the highest prospects for personal development? What impediments are there in societies for individual growth and development? And as he traveled and thought, he became more and more aware of the dangers in European nationalist societies as well as the industrial repression of individuals that was rampant through much of the Occidental world and the United States. Even at Harvard, he thought

that the overarching business interests of American enterprise were replacing genuine intellectual, artistic, and scientific inquiry. By the mid-1890s, he began planning for his early retirement from Harvard and his move to Europe in order to make progress on his own ideals and pursuit of a natural life of reason. In short, his travels led to first-hand experiences of the many human excellences possible in many different society orders and to his realization of what was possible for his own personal life of reason.

4. THE GENERATIVE ORDER OF *REASON IN SOCIETY*

Santayana's approach to societies focuses on the individual and personal achievement. For some readers, his approach is too aristocratic because Santayana seems to assume there is an essential freedom that can be governed by a rational approach to living well, and he believes, as did Aristotle and Plato, that there was a natural inequality in human life and societies. He notes that natural inequality is not the problem but suffering is [Santayana 2013, p. 67]. It is clear that not every society and certainly not every person has the means or the opportunities to choose one's lifestyle and circumstances. As we shall see later, the Aristotelian ideal of fairness was his model for honoring natural inequality. Santayana had the means and circumstances for choosing his own way of life, and he began considering what were his best, most rational options in the world as he knew it. Yes, this is perhaps aristocratic particularly if one assumes he thought everyone had the opportunity to live as he and his friends did. But it is perhaps not so aristocratic when one reads the many passages he writes regarding the subjection of individuals, of women, and of workers in the societies he discusses. Indeed, it may be that Santayana did maintain that a life of reason may be available in many societies regardless of the circumstances but he clearly saw the limitations placed on individuals in repressive societies where liberty and reason were not permitted, prized or rewarded. Indeed, he notes that the ideal aristocracy is not Plato's

Republic “for that Utopia is avowedly the ideal only for fallen and corrupt sates, since luxury and injustice, we are told, first necessitated war, and the guiding idea of all the Platonic regimen is military efficiency” [Santayana 2013, p. 60].

There is a natural inequality based on individual natures and relationships. The family is his model. For example, each family member does not have equal standing. The child is dependent on parents, the elderly grandparents no longer have the same place in family structures as they once did. But it is possible that every member experiences happiness in this natural inequality. He writes: “The ideal state and the ideal universe should be a family where all are not equal, but where all are happy.” [Santayana 2013, p. 71] The ideal society is one where the Aristotelian sense of fair treatment is in place even with natural inequalities being a part of every society, even the ideal one.

Therefore the ideal of society can never involve the infliction of injury on anybody for any purpose. Such an ideal would propose for a goal something out of equilibrium, a society which even if established could not maintain itself; but an ideal life must not tend to destroy its ideal by abolishing its own existence . . . it is impossible on moral grounds that injustice should subsist in the ideal. [Santayana 2013, p. 71]

Can such a society ever exist? No. But one can use it as the model that may enable us to achieve better relationships, government and civilizations.

5. INDIVIDUAL GROWTH AND POLITICAL ACTION

The notion of fairness as the model for societies is both historical and also prescient. It is rooted in Aristotle but prophetic of John Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice*. Indeed, Rawls in speaking of Santayana notes that Santayana’s “natural aristocracy is a possible interpretation of the two principles of justice” [Rawls 1971, p. 74,

footnote]. For Santayana, the natural inequality among humans enables each person to achieve their own excellence in a system that is fair to all and permits all to achieve what they merit based on an equality of opportunity. Rawls, of course, rejects a pure meritocracy and develops his difference principle, supporting any economic or social inequality only if it also increases the standing of the least advantaged or minimizes their losses. Santayana did not consider such fine tuning for his conception of fairness, and since his was an ideal to be achieved, it was unlikely to be found in any existing society but rather was an ideal to be encouraged.

If one reads Santayana expecting to find a commitment to political action or an organizing principle to bring groups together to fight against injustice, then one will be disappointed. There is no call to action for societies, there are only ideals for individuals to act upon based on their own individuality and circumstances. Santayana's approach to understanding world societies is based on individuals. Individuals form the links of society first by falling in love, by producing children and families that then expanding to larger societal orders of government and civilizations. The process is natural, guided by our physical propensities, desires and delights. The chapters of *Reason in Society* are generative, explicating our society begins and how ideals naturally arise in societies. The chapter titles provide this generative account: I. Love; II. Family; III. Industry, Government, and War; IV. The Aristocratic Ideal; v. Democracy; VI. Free Society; VII. Patriotism; and VIII. Ideal Society.

In summarizing *Reason in Society*, Santayana indicates there are three stages to society: the natural, the free, and the ideal. His focus is clearly on individual development within social settings. The natural state of society functions to produce individuals who are equipped with the ability and characteristics of moral freedom, that is, to produce individuals who may choose on their own, acting on their own moral authority and responsibility. Love and the family are the environments for these achievements, with love being the foundational, natural bonding force of society and a principal good

of society. The natural instincts that bring individuals together through love also bind parents and their children. Naturally individuals become members of families, tribes, and larger cultures such as cities and state governments. These associations bring about ideal goals of love and loyalty. One who truly loves and belongs to a society is open to reason and a liberal life focusing on individual development and rational ideals. Natural societies such as family and economic and political associations are more often instinctual than freely chosen. But such societies may foster and encourage individuals who may freely choose to form societies based on common interests. Such free individuals may also choose to go further and envision ideal societies where truth and beauty are the aims, independent of other human beings.

The free society is achieved through personal and emotional bonds that give rise to friendship, a sense of unanimity and belonging that is grounded in some ideal interest. These accidental characteristics of oneself and one's society are transcended in an ideal society that exceeds parochial associations and goals and where the ideal interests of the mind take precedence with excellence, beauty and truth being our individual aims. "Religion, art, and science are the chief spheres in which ideal companionship is found. It remains for us to traverse these provinces in turn and see to what extent the Life of Reason may flourish there" [Santayana 2013, p. 127].

6. GOVERNMENTS ARE LIKE THE WEATHER

If all human actions are the result of material forces, then human organizations, societies and governments are as well. For Santayana all governments are natural and arise out of their physical cultural circumstances, and wherever one finds oneself, one must adapt as best one can. Santayana sees adapting to government and changes in governmental systems as similar to adapting to the weather. As an individual, one must adjust to the weather, protect oneself, and seek a good life in a good climate. The best and the worst governments are

natural products and individuals finding themselves in tyrannical circumstances should adjust as one would to extreme weather.

As Santayana writes:

Now the most tyrannical government, like the best, is a natural product maintained by an equilibrium of natural forces. It is simply a new mode of mechanical energy to which the philosopher living under it must adjust himself as he would to the weather. But when the vehicle of nature's inclemency is a heartless man, even if the harm done be less, it puts on a new and a moral aspect. The source of injury is then not only natural but criminal as well, and the result is a sense of wrong added to misfortune. It must needs be that offence come, but woe to him by whom the offence cometh. He justly arouses indignation and endures remorse. [Santayana 2013, pp. 70-71]

7. DEMOCRACY LEADS TO MONARCHY

Democratic forms of government are natural, and they also have natural consequences that one should prepare for just like preparing for different kinds of weather. All forms of government are repressive and tend to reinforce natural or imagined inequalities. Democracies come to the forefront because of inequalities, and the democratic effort to enforce equality usually leads to repression and often the rise of dictatorial leaders. Santayana's view of American democracy was skeptical. He saw U.S. democracy as fostering the 19th and 20th century industrialism where workers strained to make a living while a few captains of industry flourished. And even the captains of industry spent their lives working on activity, or making money and being occupied with the means for production. Such a life was not conducive to a focus on the principal ends that make life worthwhile.

Furthermore, democracy's forced equality is most likely to turn into a dictatorship or monarchy. In this, Santayana's view reflects the ancient Greek view, but also is a precocious perspective of the

upcoming rise of Hitler and Mussolini. One wonders what he would say of the contemporary American political scene where repression and ridicule appear to be trumpeting in much of the western world.

Today, industrialism is fading but technology is ascending. The digital revolution and global communication replaces physical labor in industries with education and technique. But the digital revolution may seem no less repressive for many workers who now spend their time doing many more tasks than was possible in the industrial world and rather than providing more free time, increases one's productivity as well as one's working hours. In addition, many manufacturing and sales positions are being replaced by artificial intelligence and its applications. Perhaps Santayana's view of AI would be the same. If technological development does not enhance human life, one must choose environments that will. Santayana's would ask whether the digital revolution produces forms of life and government that are worthwhile.

Technology makes possible widespread communication that may serve to bring the peoples of the world together, but it also has the possibility of widespread disruption and destruction in our world. Communication, electrical power, market indices and activities, travel data and essential personal and public information, food distribution, and more are all subject to technological disruption that could change our lives immediately and for the long run. In addition, massive communication is now possible on small devices such as one's cell phone and portable computers, but these also have the potential for destruction on a large scale and at the hands of one or only a few people. How does one prepare for such prospects? Where is an environment that would reduce the possibility of such disruption and destruction?

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

If one follows Santayana, each of us must find our own answers to living a life. So where does this leave us? From Santayana's

perspective, one should prepare for governments in a way similar to preparing for weather. Looking for the best climates, preparing for incimate weather, if necessary moving to a different location, and in cases of violent weather, seek shelter as quickly as one can. In mountainous East Tennessee, when trouble is brewing one heads for the hills. The natural tendency of all governments is unfairness and an enforcement of inequality. Government forces many people to be instruments of production or technology who live a demanding schedule fearing scarcity and unfair treatment.

Santayana provides little incentive or hope for trying to alter or change the natural unfairness of government. Whatever government replaces another will evolve naturally to a repressive one. The task of the individual is to find the best circumstances that make life worthwhile. Weather and governments come and go, flourish and falter, but the spiritual life of the individual makes living worthwhile even knowing that individual survival is not possible.

For those who are involved in social and political movements, Santayana's individualist response to governments is difficult to swallow. Even so, there is much truth in what he writes. There is turmoil all around us and there always will be. Perhaps the task of living is determining what makes life worthwhile even in the midst of such societies as we find ourselves in. Or, following Santayana, look for places, societies, cultures and nations where one is more likely to be able to focus on one's ideals knowing all along that ideals do not exist in the natural world. Basically, from a naturalistic perspective there is no purpose in nature. Materialism is chaos except as we identify patterns and habits in its currents, and our identification of such patterns and habits are projections from our natural instincts and interest. Our ideals are the highest form of living well, and although impossible to achieve for any sustained period, they remain our ideals.

Even if this is true, and I suspect it is, this may lead to different approaches depending on one's physical circumstances. Some people believe, quite naturally, that there is more that we can do than merely pursue individual ideals. These activists believe there

is more that will benefit ourselves and our fellow human beings, and they involve themselves in social and political movements, in bettering the circumstances of those near them and far away. Being true to one's self and one's circumstances for some may mean direct involvement in changing social and political circumstances. For Santayana, the spiritual life with its ideals of beauty and truth was the principal element that made life worthwhile. For others, it may be shaping and altering one's community in a way that fosters fairness, including for those whose ideal is the spiritual life as well as for those for whom it is not.

Our reaction? If we are rational and relatively free, that is our choice unless natural circumstances take that decision from us.

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